1. (currently amended) A protective lug cap assembly for protection of an individual lug of a friction brake disc, wherein said disc has a periphery, and wherein said disc periphery has a plurality of circumferentially spaced slots, separating a plurality of circumferentially spaced lugs, wherein said slots are separated by a distance and disposed for engagement by a spline of a torque device, each of said slots having two generally radially extending wall portions, wherein said wall portions have a top, a bottom, and opposing sides, and a bottom surface extending between and interconnecting said wall portion bottoms comprising:

a lug cap having a lug cap face, wherein said lug cap covers only one of said slot wall portions and extends circumferentially away from said slot on said slot wall top and said slot wall opposing sides, covering a portion of the lug, and wherein said lug cap face is a portion of the lug cap which covers said slot wall portion, wherein said lug cap face is relatively parallel to said slot wall;

a load bearing fastening device operative to fasten the lug cap to the individual lug, such that said lug cap does not contact said slot wall portion, and wherein said lug cap face is separated from said slot wall portion by an air gap.

2. (original) The protective lug cap assembly of claim 1 wherein said lug cap extends circumferentially away from said slot approximately one half of the distance to an adjacent slot.

3. (original) The protective lug cap assembly of claim 1 wherein said periphery is an outer periphery.

4. (original) The protective lug cap assembly of claim 1 wherein said periphery is an inner periphery.

5. (original) The protective lug cap assembly of claim 1 wherein said lug cap is comprised of a steel alloy material.

6. (original) The protective lug cap assembly of claim 1 wherein said lug cap is comprised of a cobalt alloy material.

7. (previously presented) The protective lug cap assembly of claim 1 wherein said lug cap is comprised of a cobalt alloy, specifically Stellite® 21, material.

8. (currently amended) The protective lug cap assembly of claim 1 wherein ~~there is a gap between said lug cap and said slot wall portion, wherein the~~ said air gap is approximately 0.04 inches.

9. (original) The protective lug cap assembly of claim 1 wherein said load bearing fastening device comprises rivets, wherein said rivets are installed approximately parallel to a radial plane of the disc.

10. (currently amended) A method of protecting lugs of a friction brake disc wherein said disc has a periphery, and wherein said disc periphery has a plurality of circumferentially spaced slots, separating a plurality of circumferentially spaced lugs, wherein said slots are separated by a distance and disposed for engagement by a spline of a torque device, each of said slots having two generally radially extending wall portions, wherein said wall portions have a top, a bottom, and opposing sides, and a bottom surface extending between and interconnecting said wall portion bottoms, the method comprising the steps of:

covering each of said slot wall portions and each associated lug with a lug cap, wherein said lug cap has a lug cap face, wherein said lug cap covers only one of said slot wall portions and extends circumferentially away from said slot wall portion on said slot wall top and said slot wall opposing sides, covering a portion of the associated lug, and wherein said lug cap face is a portion of the lug cap which covers said slot wall portion, wherein said lug cap face is relatively parallel to said slot wall; and,

mounting said lug cap to said lug with a load bearing fastening device, such that said lug cap face does not contact said slot wall portion, and wherein said lug cap face is separated from said slot wall portion by an air gap.

11. (previously presented) The method of protecting lugs of a friction brake disc of claim 10 wherein each said lug cap extends circumferentially away from said slot approximately one half of the distance to an adjacent slot.

12. (original) The method of protecting lugs of a friction brake disc of claim 10 wherein said periphery is an outer periphery.

13. (original) The method of protecting lugs of a friction brake disc of claim 10 wherein said periphery is an inner periphery.

14. (previously presented) The method of protecting lugs of a friction brake disc of claim 10 wherein each said lug cap is comprised of a steel alloy material.

15. (previously presented) The method of protecting lugs of a friction brake disc of claim 10 wherein each said lug cap is comprised of a cobalt alloy material.

16. (previously presented) The method of protecting lugs of a friction brake disc of claim 10 wherein each said lug cap is comprised of a cobalt alloy, specifically Stellite® 21, material.

17. (currently amended) The method of protecting lugs of a friction brake disc of claim 10 wherein ~~there is a gap between said lug cap and said slot wall portion, wherein the~~ said air gap is approximately 0.04 inches.

18. (original) The method of protecting lugs of a friction brake disc of claim 10 wherein said load bearing fastening device comprises rivets, wherein said rivets are installed approximately parallel to a radial plane of the disc.

19. (currently amended) Method of load transfer from a torque device spline to an individual lug of a friction brake disc to increase the disc's load margin, wherein said disc has a periphery, and wherein said disc periphery has a plurality of circumferentially spaced slots, separating a plurality of circumferentially spaced lugs, wherein said slots are separated by a distance and disposed for engagement by said torque device spline, each of said slots having two generally radially extending wall portions, wherein said wall portions have a top, a bottom, and opposing sides, and a bottom surface extending between and interconnecting said wall portion bottoms, the method comprising the steps of:

covering each of said slot wall portions with a lug cap wherein said lug cap has a lug cap face, wherein each said lug cap covers only one of said slot wall portions and extends circumferentially away from said slot wall portion on said slot wall top and said slot wall opposing sides, covering a portion of the lug, and wherein said lug cap face is a portion of the lug cap which covers said slot wall portion wherein said lug cap face is relatively parallel to said slot wall; and,

mounting said lug cap to said individual lug with a load bearing fastening device, such that said lug cap face does not contact said slot wall portion, and wherein said lug cap face is separated from said slot wall portion by an air gap.a

~~force applied to the lug cap will be transferred to the lug via said fastening device, and not via said slot wall portion.~~

20. (cancelled)

21. (original) The method of claim 19 wherein said lug cap extends circumferentially away from said slot approximately one half of the distance to an adjacent slot.

22. (original) The method of claim 19 wherein said periphery is an outer periphery.

23. (original) The method of claim 19 wherein said periphery is an inner periphery.

24. (original) The method of claim 19 wherein said lug cap is comprised of a steel alloy material.

25. (original) The method of claim 19 wherein said lug cap is comprised of a cobalt alloy material.

26. (previously presented) The method of claim 19 wherein said lug cap is comprised of a cobalt alloy, specifically Stellite® 21, material.

27. (original) The method of claim 19 wherein ~~there is a gap between said lug cap and said slot wall portion, wherein the~~ said air gap is approximately 0.04 inches.

28. (original) The method of claim 19 wherein said load bearing fastening device comprises rivets, wherein said rivets are installed approximately parallel to a radial plane of the disc.

29. (cancelled)